SOULS
DON'T
DIE
A 20TH ANNIVERSARY IRON GIANT FANZINE
JESTER

Dear Reader,

The Iron Giant is truly a film like no other. It's hard for me to fully describe the extent to which this film has had an impact on my own life - to say nothing of the effect it's had on people around the world! As such, I felt it was almost necessary to pay tribute to it for its 20th Anniversary.

This movie has given me so many wonderful opportunities as a result of my passion for it, and putting together this zine has been one of them. I am so honored and so proud to present the work of the artists contained within. It has been a fantastic experience working with everyone involved, and in turn I hope it's a fantastic experience looking at their work contained within!

I hope that this project will have the chance to grow in its efforts next year - but even if that doesn't come to pass, this first outing has been an effort I had only dreamed of in the past. And it's only thanks to everyone who participated, in any way, with helping this project come to fruition.

Here's to 20 more years of celebrating this fantastic film!

moon

by coldergeist

by quinn

by hyriaven

Who He Chose to Be

By Alaina (mccoppinscrapyard)

It was June 20, 1969 in Rockwell, Maine.

At times like this, he missed the Giant more than ever. Boyhood adventures felt like a fever dream sometimes, but for 21-year-old Hogarth Hughes, they were all too real. He'd lost the Giant 12 years ago, but after finding the last piece and setting it free, he knew his friend was out there... somewhere. And there was so much the now-grown boy wanted to tell him.

Even if the Giant wouldn't understand right away, he would certainly come to terms once the youth explained his feelings. The robot was clever: through Hogarth he'd learned about nature, life, death, and the soul. Surely he could tell of his emotions. Of love. In an ideal world, Hogarth would just practice telling the robot before he worked up the courage to talk to his mother and stepdad. But for now, he could only tell himself.

Dean— (he knew he'd tell Dean first. He always did.),

There's something important I need to tell you. (Too serious?) *I know this is unexpected, but I'm telling you because I trust you.*

How could he frame it? Not as a tragedy or a burden, but just as another part of him. Like how he excelled in school but had always felt like an outsider, or his clear blue eyes or gap teeth. He was an adult now, old enough to know himself. In fact, he'd wondered for several years. It was now, recently, that he chose to accept it. He'd just tell the truth— live his truth.

What I mean is— I like guys. (He could spare the details— exactly how long he'd known, his crush on his friend, how he daydreamed about other boys....) *I'm gay.* (Gay... not as in happy, but something entirely different. An identity.)

Hogarth didn't write anything else on the notepad.

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A letter from Greg came in the mail the next day. Annie asked about it— she'd worried about that nice boy from Hogarth's engineering classes ever since he got drafted. He was far from the first University of Southern Maine student to join (or rather, get drafted into) the military.

Her son only gave the necessary details. "He says the temperature's nicer than Maine but there are too many bugs. Rations are mediocre as always. He can't wait to come back." He didn't tell her that his friend wrote about feeling isolated and empty, of sleepless nights in the jungle. Such talk of war would only frighten his poor mother, who prayed each day the draft wouldn't come for Hogarth. She'd lost a husband to war— losing her son would be too much.

Dean was the opposite: well-informed of the horrors in Vietnam from the start of the war. Hogarth's stepdad, a self-proclaimed beatnik in years past, had always been a pacifist. He read the papers, local and national, listened to the radio's manufactured, sanitized-for-the-public accounts of the conflict, and saw through it. "They're saying it's worse than the government wants us to think. And it's not nearing an end."

Hogarth, too, felt the disconnect between Greg's letters and the radio programs. He'd seen the hippies on his campus— war is hell. Give peace a chance. How they, the youth, the lucky ones who stayed behind instead of abroad, had to advocate for the youth who'd been forced into this war. This was their fight— without weapons, but one of courage. Even if Hogarth didn't quite consider himself a full-blown hippie, he supported their cause, especially as it grew closer to home at college and in Rockwell.

Since Rockwell was only half an hour away from USM, Hogarth could easily commute. Even during the summer, he'd borrow the car and drive off to Portland to spend some time there, visiting his friends in the dorms. Last time he'd gone, two girls in tie-dye were handing out fliers: "The Real Cost of the Vietnam War". He'd grabbed a couple for his other anti-war friends, and one for Dean. Even if Dean was in his forties, he appreciated the activism of the youth.

Hogarth drove off to the campus the same day to meet Keith and Tony for an early dinner and to see a science-fiction movie. They'd all received similar letters from Greg— how many stamps did the army give him?

"Can't believe Nixon takes 25,000 troops outta 'Nam just this month and Gregory's not one of 'em," Tony groaned over his hamburger. "'Course, I wouldn't trust 'im with that. This war's gonna just keep going."

Hogarth fiddled with his straw wrapper as he was prone to do when he worried.

"Do we have to talk about this? We always do," grumbled Keith. "Can't we talk about how they're gonna put a man on the moon next month? Why the damn war?"

"That's because it's all I can think about," said Tony, Hogarth feeling caught in the middle between his friends. For the dozenth time, he wished Greg were here to smooth things out. Hogarth had always felt like a loner in school, until people started to accept him more after the Giant incident. But college— that's where he'd found real friends. Where he felt less of an outcast. Of course he still did in some ways, such as his big secret he hadn't told anyone. *Would they stop being my friend if they knew?*

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On the 29th, when Hogarth got the paper, he learned of the riots in New York. News about protests was nothing foreign, but this one wasn't about the war. Instead, it was about the fight for acceptance, the freedom to exist without persecution. The police had clashed with activists outside a bar, escalating a riot. It was one of the first times Hogarth had read that phrase— *gay rights activists*.

Surely Dean had heard about it too— would now be a bad time to tell him? He had to wait for the right moment, when Mom wasn't there or when his stepdad wasn't working on an art project.

Luckily, he found Dean reading a collection of poetry in the living room that afternoon.

"Hey Dea— Dad," the young man muttered. "Bad time?"

"Listen, kid, I know your Mom and I have been married 9 years but you don't have to call me Dad. We've been over this." Dean looked weary from welding, now reclining in his robe on this lazy Sunday. "No time like the present."

Hogarth took a seat on a chair diagonal from Dean. "I need to talk with you about something." His tone was matter-of-fact, but not somber, not guilty even as he felt a tinge of shame. *Don't look sad.*

"You know you can tell me anything, Hogarth." And deep down, Hogarth knew Dean meant it. All those years ago, he'd trusted him with another enormous secret as Dean hid the Giant in his scrapyard. He'd opened up to him every time he had trouble fitting in at school or worried about how scary the world looked in the news, when his peers left for Vietnam. Everything he didn't tell his mother right away, he always told Dean.

"Anything?" Hogarth inhaled and exhaled the space between them in a deep sigh.

Dean looked over his reading glasses, a knowing smile on his face. "Of course."

If Hogarth had a coffee mug, a newspaper, anything in his hands, he'd be looking down at it as if to find the answers. The next two words left his lips after a too-long silence. "I'm gay."

The artist nodded, processing the information he'd just received. "Hogarth," he said. "I just want you to know first and foremost that I love you, kid. I may not technically be your dad, but we're family. I love you."

Hogarth looked up through wide blue eyes, a bit surprised Dean's voice didn't carry any disappointment. "You're not upset?"

"Of course not. You're an adult now, Hogarth. You're old enough to live your life. To know who you are. Who you want to be." Dean's face looked comforting and affirming, something Hogarth had seen often before. "To love who you want." Dean rubbed the back of his neck as he often did. "I'm proud of you for telling me, for being brave enough to trust me."

"You've seen the news? About the riot, right?" Hogarth asked, jumping to a new topic. "In New York."

Dean nodded. "I have. We live in an era of change, Hogarth. More change than I'd seen before. And not just technology with the Space Race and all. Social change. Civil rights for black Americans, protests against the war, and now, this." Brown eyes carried a sense of hope. Dean had always carried counter-cultural ideas, and he'd done his best to instill similar values and a sense of independence in Hogarth. "I have a lot of hope for your generation," he stated. "And a lot of hope for you. But you got to go out there and make the change."

Hogarth moved next to Dean, filled with a new confidence and the same hope his stepdad carried. It felt like several months since he'd hugged his father figure, but he didn't hesitate to wrap both arms around him. Soon he'd tell his mother, too. He'd talk with her about everything she wanted to know: his engineering classes, his plans for constructing robots, how his friends were really doing, how he really felt.

"Thank you, Dean. I love you too."

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At that point, Hogarth knew what he had to do. He yearned for that sense of community, even in the face of danger and dissent. With other college students, other people who were gay and pacifists like him. A few days later, pulling the flier from out of his backpack, he saw a handwritten note at the bottom: Anti-War Rally Next Week on Campus. July 3rd.

Great. Using the black corded phone on Dean's desk, Hogarth dialed Tony's phone number. "There's a peace rally soon and I wanted to know if you were going," he explained. "I mean, if you want. It's the 3rd."

"I'm in."

The phone call felt like a start. As of now, he had at least one comrade in this fight. Hogarth still didn't know where to meet other young men like him, but he planned to do some research of his own: at libraries, among some of his more socially conscious peers. Maybe even at the protest. And perhaps once he opened up to Keith or Tony and they accepted him, they'd have more information in helping him find kindred spirits— maybe even that cute guy in his chem class Hogarth had wondered about.

But undoubtedly Mom would ask where he'd gone. And Hogarth didn't want to make her worry.

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"Hey Mom. I'm gonna take the car to Portland tomorrow." Hogarth had asked to borrow it several times, just like any other day.

Annie Hughes-McCoppin, still bright and elegant in her forties and in a crisp pink waitress uniform, nodded. "Are your friends doing something? Where are you going? I don't want to worry."

Maybe carrying a sheet of cardboard for a sign was too conspicuous. "There's a peace rally. I thought I wanted to go. It's the least I can do."

Annie's brow furrowed. She wasn't as aware as Dean, but she'd heard about clashes with the police at protests. "Oh. Honey..." she sighed, lips drawn tight. "It's good that you want to stand up for something. Noble of you. You were always like Dean— like your father, too— in that regard." Annie shook her head. "I. I just want you to stay safe, okay? The police..."

"I know. Dean says you can't always trust them to protect us protestors. The common people. We don't have that security," Hogarth reiterated, thinking of how the army, men with guns, had gotten involved because they were so afraid of the Giant. Now, men with guns were afraid of teens and twenty-somethings with anti-war signs singing protest songs.

"Just promise me you'll stay out of trouble, okay, Hogarth? Your stepdad and I love you very much."

He nodded firmly, putting on a brave face for his mother as he always had from the time he'd lost his father in another war. Hugging her as closely as he had Dean just a few nights ago, but even tighter, Hogarth wanted to transfer that feeling of safety to tomorrow's protest. "I know, Mom."

And he really did know.

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Beside his friend and peers as they marched through the streets of Portland, Hogarth Hughes held his chin and his cardboard sign high, with a message for the people, for the country: War is Not the Answer. His was one of many, with messages like "How many more?" and "Out of Vietnam now!" The July sun shone in his face, rays brighter than the usual coastal Maine day.

Even there, with the protestors shouting and the cops shouting back from their post on the sidewalks, in the heat, Hogarth felt real. It had been a few short days since he'd had that talk with Dean, but already, just by standing up for his values, he had come a long way. This was who he wanted to be: authentic and courageous. The world didn't have to accept him immediately. He would be a voice for change.

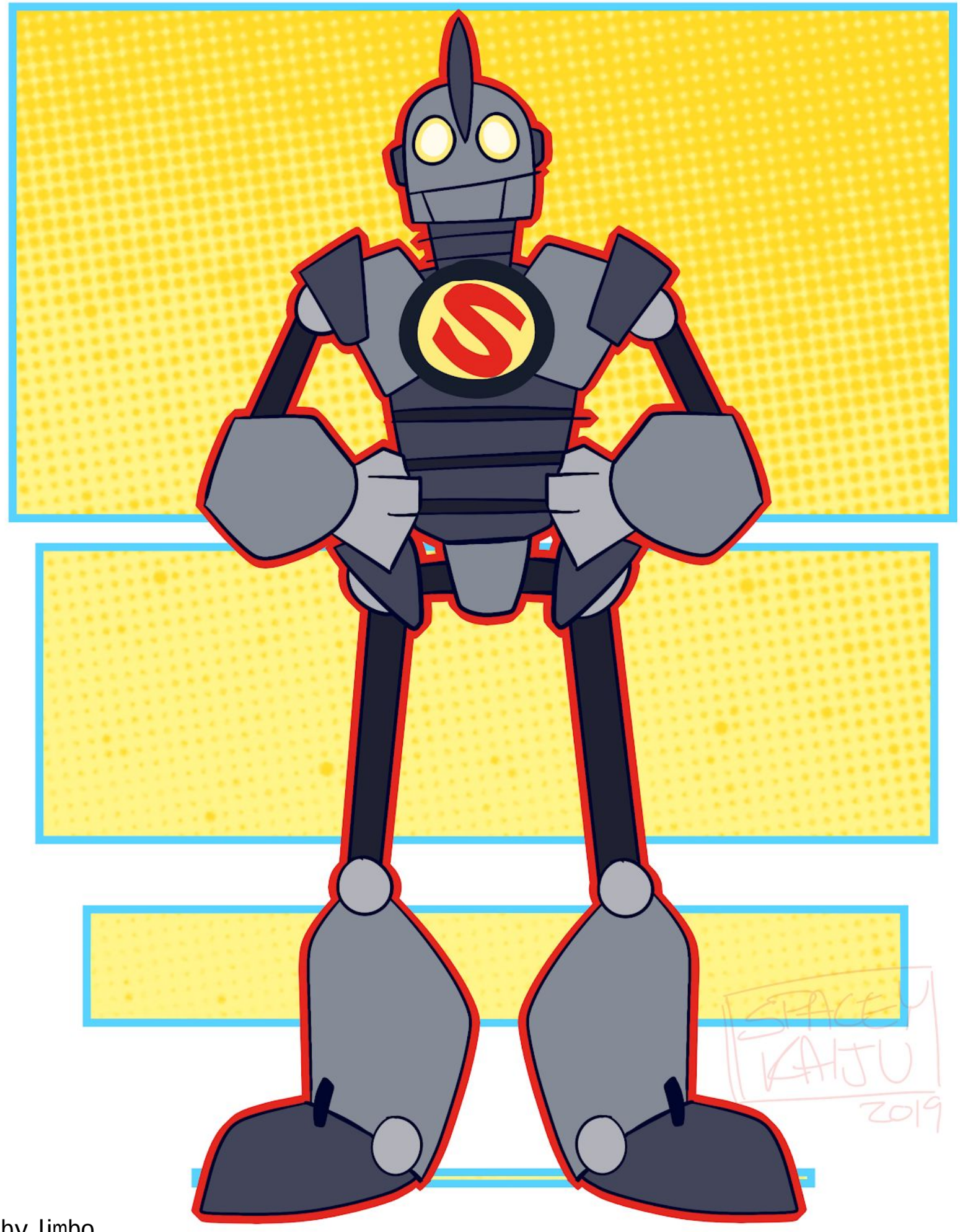
Hogarth knew that as he grew up, he'd have to make his own choices. His mother and stepfather could be there for him, but ultimately, it was his life. And still, he'd hold each memory, everything his family and the Giant had taught him, close within himself.

As he took his friend's hand and marched forward, pride surged through Hogarth. He had never felt more free.

by jester
JESTER

by kara

by keziah



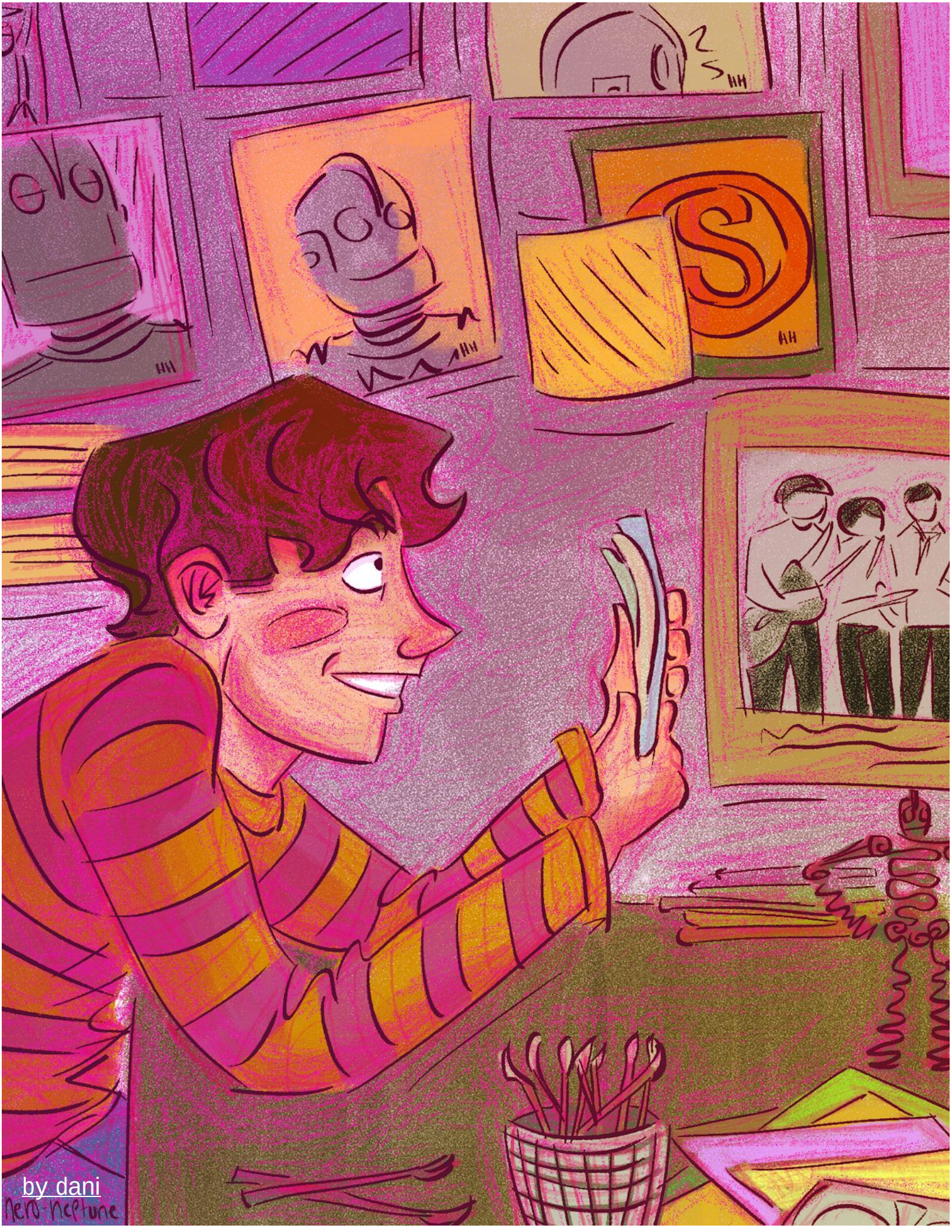
by limbo

by Iinus

by moon

by okami

by dani
nero-neptune


by dani
nerd-neptune

by kai (above) & casey (below)

Working together, Bonding forever

By Frooty (frootysparkycakes)

Hogarth treads as quietly as he can, purposely in the softest pair of socks he owns so he can slide soundlessly across the house's ancient floorboards. He has a mission, all his years of training have led him to this moment, he just needs to go a few...more...steps...

The lights flash on and Hogarth freezes in place for a moment before turning to see Dean dressed in his signature red housecoat leaning against the kitchen door frame, hand still raised casually where he flicked the light on.

Hogarth spins, hiding his hands behind his back even though they're empty, a nervous and guilty habit. "Dean! My man! What is up-pah?" He pops the p, keeping his voice low so as not to wake his mother as well. He shoots a couple of finger guns after a second to play up his casualness. Oh yeah, he's totally convincing.

Dean just stares at him, a silent question.

"Ok, fine, you caught me red handed." Hogarth raises his hands in surrender and sighs, defeated. "I was going for a late night snack run, happy?"

Dean just raises an eyebrow, looking slowly to the bread box where he knows Hogarth keeps his snacks, back to where Hogarth is. He's standing over by the sink, very clearly having passed the bread box. Dean waits, because apparently a few years into living with Hogarth and his mom has made him a spy or dad or something.

"Ok, fine, I was going for the espresso, but it's because I *need* it!"

Dean holds his hands up, placating. "Hey, you know my style, but your mom is sleeping and I'm *pretty sure* neither of us want her waking up when you go off the rails on caffeine."

"Who, me?" Hogarth scoffs, "I'll be super quiet, so quiet it'll be like I'm not even here. 'Cause I won't be. I'll be outside."

Now, Dean is new to this whole parenting thing. Therefore he is no expert by any means. But, even still, he knows enough about the gig to know that letting a high schooler outside in the middle of the night is probably the biggest *no-no* he can do. He glances to the clock to confirm that it is, in fact, well past midnight. Theoretically that should mean having little spunky teenagers in bed.

"That's a hard 'no' from me, kiddo. What do you need the espresso for anyway? Or going out so late - early - whatever you wanna call it."

Hogarth sighs, deflated. He'd tried the sneaky route, now is the time for the cold hard truth. "It's this project. It's due soon and I completely forgot about it until now. I have a general idea on what I wanna do but I didn't want mom to know that I left it till this late to complete." Hogarth shrugs, "She's always on me about punctuality but it really did just... slip my mind."

Dean nods, because he knows that Hogarth can get stuck into a track of thought and ignore anything else. He could get so focused on one thing that nothing else existed for that slice of time. Dean could understand, when he got in the groove he too would lose time just to do the thing he was focused on.

""Alright, how 'bout this." Dean comes into the kitchen and pulls down the coffee and a packet of cocoa. "We drink some of this, and then I'll help you with your project. How does that sound?"

"You want to help me? With school?" Hogarth hadn't given much thought to how Dean would have been academically, but he struck Hogarth more as the rowdy bad kid type than the studious type.

Dean shrugs, "I'm not saying I'll be much help with the school side, but I can at least keep you awake, right? Come on, tell me what you had in mind."

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It's a physics project, something that Dean knows technically next to nothing, but also still a little something. By which he means that he knows applicable things like two objects cannot occupy the same space, and similar common sense things. Anything more than that and he's lost.

"You understand all this?" Dean lets out a low whistle when he looks at the notebook Hogarth is showing him with his calculations and planning for his project. Last minute work, but still very detailed with math double checked to complete accuracy.

"Yeah, it's not that bad." Hogarth shrugs as he tries to look casual while yanking on a piece of metal. It's way too big for him though, so Dean goes to help before the kid gives himself a hernia, glad he'd decided to change so he wouldn't get his favorite housecoat dirty. Hogarth's original plan was to build his project out of cardboard boxes and paper towel tubes and whatever else he could find, but Dean had offered to drive them to his scrapyard to get the materials they needed and use his studio to put everything together. Already, there's a pile by Dean's truck of the pieces of metal that Hogarth had deemed worthy of his project, but still Hogarth needed just a few more.

Hogarth went back to sifting through the scrap, keeping up the idle chatter with Dean following close behind as he went. "I mean. You gotta memorize the formulas, but after that it's just plugging stuff in. Half the time the questions on tests give you all of it in a handbasket."

Dean wanted to point out that none of the things he'd seen in the notebook were given, all were calculated. And to memorize all those formulas, Dean didn't have the brain space for it. "You gotta stop selling yourself short. This is amazing, Hogarth. You have a knack for it."

Hogarth opens his mouth to protest but Dean holds up a hand to stop him, "This isn't something you can get through by '*just doing the stupid homework*', this takes work. Own it."

Hogarth goes quiet as he and Dean manage to pry the next piece of metal loose and tug it carefully onto the pile they'd collected by the truck. He's always been a little insecure about his own worth, but Dean always encouraged him whenever the opportunity. Now, just as in times past, Hogarth found himself feeling like maybe he believed it. Just a little, but the doubt was slowly but surely being extinguished. He

appraises what they have to hide the blush and nods approvingly. “I think this should be enough. We can always come back for more, right?”

Dean shakes his head, “No, nope, I’m drawing the line at two trips. It’s already early for the *one* trip.”

Hogarth grins sheepishly, looks around for a moment, then as nonchalantly as a teenager who’s been caught can, kicks another piece of metal into the pile. Dean rolls his eyes but doesn’t comment on it when they load the haul into his truck. They make the short trip back to his workshop and drag out the metal pieces in quick order. It isn’t especially hard work, but even with the weather being a little chilly, the strain of muscles has them both sticky with sweat before long.

With all the materials laid out, Hogarth digs out his notebook with his sketches and calculations and begins to separate the scraps into pieces he thinks he can use whole and which need to be cut to size or shaped into what he needs. Pipes and sheets and tubes of junk organize into the path that Hogarth has chosen. Most of the bigger pieces will be put into place as the support system underneath the structure, but for now they sit in a pile to the side.

Dean picks up the notebook and studies the piles for a moment. “Alright, so this is gonna be some serious welding we’re doing here. You remember what I showed you?”

Hogarth nods. Hogarth still thought there were cooler things than arts and crafts, but he had to admit that playing with fire to create things was pretty cool. The best part had to be spending time with Dean, getting to know him beyond what he’d already come to know.

Their bond, already strong because of the trials they’d faced together, had been tempered through the long hours in the studio. Hogarth had learned a lot in that time, more than he thought he would. He knows he won’t forget this time he spends with his new step dad, nor the things he learns, in a million years.

Hogarth and Dean prepare themselves for the welding, donning their gear and arranging the metal into place with Hogarth’s sketches as their guide. When it’s

finished, it'll be a Rube Goldberg machine that will put any other project to shame. For now it's a pile of junk, but that's the best thing about works in progress: they transform even the trashiest of trash into something wonderful.

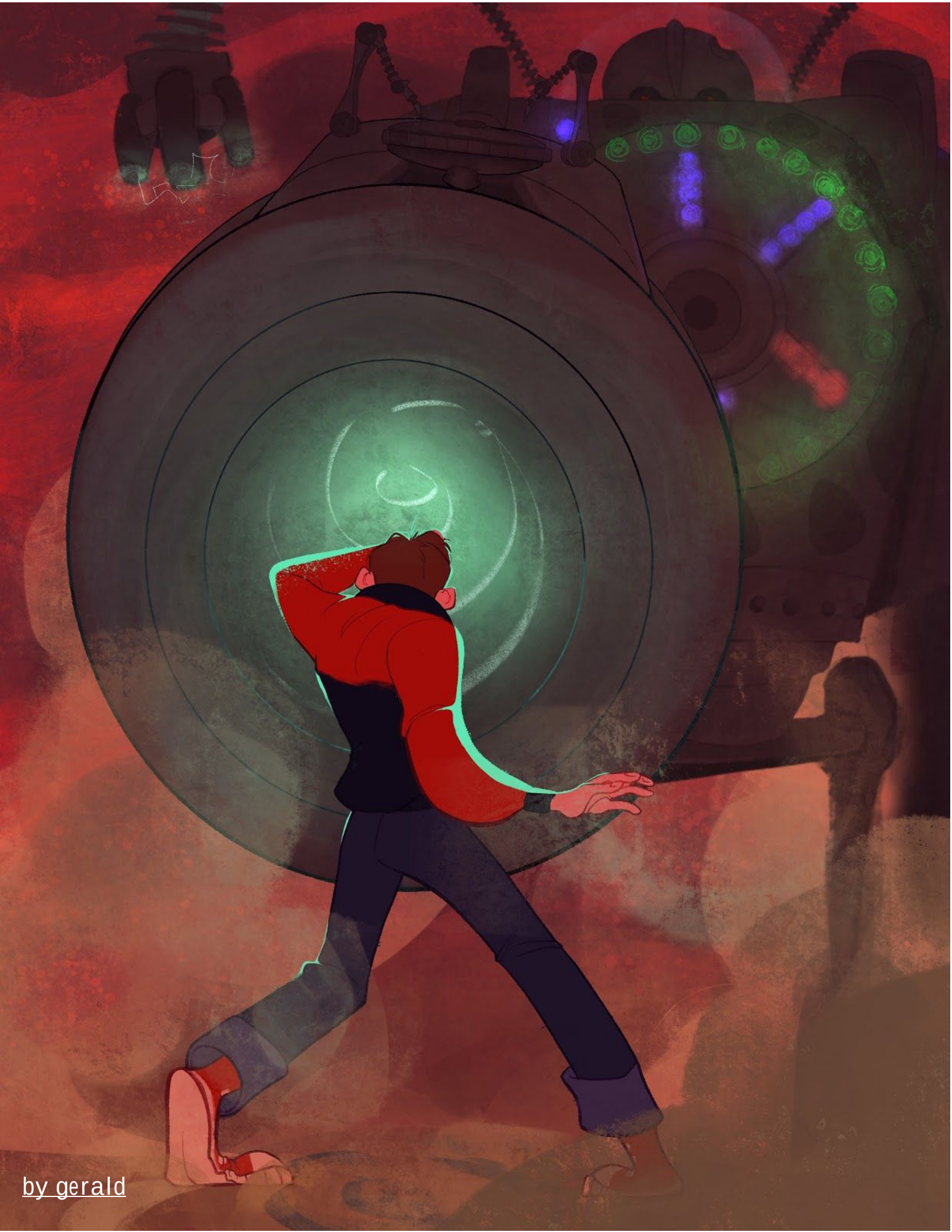
They work for hours, testing and retesting to make sure that everything falls exactly where it's supposed to. By the end, Hogarth can barely keep his eyes open and Dean sends him to sit in the truck with the windows open to let the cool night air filter through. Dean puts the finishing touches onto the project and looks proudly at the work they accomplished.

He finds himself looking back at the source of all that pride, Hogarth sleeping soundly in the passenger side. Dean can't help but smile when he notices that Hogarth is using Dean's housecoat that he'd left in the truck in case it got cold. Hogarth worked so hard on this project, not wanting to leave until Dean had pointed out it wasn't the safest idea to be nodding off with a welding torch in his hands.

Dean feels incredibly proud; proud to have met such a great young man, proud to have helped him, as late as he is to the party and in whatever small way, become who he is today. Most of all, though, Dean is proud that he chose to become a part of his family, claim the kid as his own in all the ways that mattered.

With heart filled to the brim with warmth, Dean loads the project they'd worked so hard on into the back of the truck, ready to take it and Hogarth back to their home.

by dez


by gerald

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